22 February 2013

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

During the past week a student has been infected with head lice. As there is a small risk of transmission within the school population, I have taken this opportunity to reproduce for your benefit, information we recently received from the South Western Sydney Area Health Service on how to deal with this problem.

*Head lice starts as a small egg about the size of a grain of salt glued to the base of the hair shaft. The eggs hatch in about 7 to 10 days. A mature head louse is 2 to 3 mm long, very quick moving and very difficult to see in the hair. Head lice are usually transmitted by direct contact with the scalp of an infested person or by contact with personal items such as combs which have been freshly contaminated by an infected person.*

*Although your son/daughter may not seem to have a problem he/she may have already become infected and it can take 7 to 10 days before symptoms occur. Therefore, we recommend that your child be treated for head lice. Several treatments are available from your local chemist. It is important that you read the information which is contained with the product and follow the instructions carefully.*

*Please inspect your child’s hair carefully. If any eggs or lice are seen, the entire family should be treated. In this situation, pregnant women, people with sensitive skin and parents with children younger than 12 months should see their local doctor before using these treatments. If no lice or eggs are seen, then the child should still be treated (but not the family).*

The South Western Public Health Unit would recommend the following:

- Apply the lotion/cream to the scalp as instructed. Leave on for recommended time (if required);
- All clothes and bed linen should be laundered in hot water;
- Carpets and furniture should be vacuumed or gently ironed. Items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned should be placed in a plastic bag for 3-4 days;
- Combs and brushes can be cleaned with hot water and detergent.

We thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions about head lice or anything connected with this letter, please ask your family doctor or contact a Public Health Nurse at the Public Health Unit.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Mr Craig Mooney
Assistant-Principal